Chapter 58
Disability Issues, Aging, and Preventive Measures

Ashok Kori
Dharwad Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (DIMHANS), India

Manjunath R. Bajantri
Dharwad Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (DIMHANS), India

ABSTRACT

As we know, aging is an ongoing biological process from which no human being can escape. Although everyone is familiar with ageing, defining it is not so easy. There is no United Nations standard numerical criterion of old age, but, it is agreed cut off is 60 plus years. Currently, due to the availability and accessibility of effective medication and treatment at specialty hospitals that increase life expectancy of old age people, over the past century, the population, although aged with disabilities, has aged around the world. Recent advances in the field of medicine, public health, technology, and rehabilitation in different streams have reduced the discrepancy in life expectancy for persons with disabilities.

INTRODUCTION

It is very essential to understand disability, ageing and preventive measures of elder population. The population percentage of old age people varies from country to country. India's elderly population is estimated at 10 crores in 2011, and is projected to reach 20 crores by 2030. The number of elderly in India is rising rapidly. The proportion of elderly persons in the total population is expected to increase from 8.3 percent in 2011 to 12.4 percent in 2026 (Bharati & Singh 2013). According to the Census of Government of India, the elderly population accounted for 8.2% of the total population in 2011, and the number is likely to increase dramatically over the next four decades in India to 19% in 2050. The global demographic trend, however, tells us that, with the passage of time, the countries have experienced ageing of population. The proportion of older persons in the population of a country has increased. Due to economic well-being, better health care system, good medicines, etc. there is substantial reduction in

mortality in the society. Reduced mortality has led to reduction in fertility too. These factors together have resulted in increasing number of elderly persons in the population. This phenomenon, called population ageing, is a dynamic demographic trend all over the world.

The report on Elderly in India from Ministry of statistics and program implementation indicates that on population ageing. As per this, the population ageing, started in the last century with developed countries, is now encompassing developing countries too India, by no means, is an exception to this phenomenon. Over the years, the structure of population has changed and will further change in the time to come. Population ageing has profound social, economic and political implications for a country. The increasing number of older persons put a strain on health care and social care systems in the country. Old age comes with lot of ailment and diseases. In case of large number of elderly persons in the population, the country needs more and more health and medical services, facilities and resources. More and more number of hospitals, doctors, nurses are required. Government spending on health care is increased with the increase of average age of population (Elderly in India, 2016). Very old people, due to their reduced mobility and debilitating disabilities, need other people to do things for them. With the increasing trend of nuclear families in the society and with fewer children in the family, the care of older persons in the families gets increasingly difficult. To fulfil caring needs of aged persons more and more health care staff with appropriate skills are required.

UNDERSTANDING DISABILITY

Definition of Disability have been mentioned by various authors and defined in Acts of Government of India. It is difficult to define 'Disability' since it varies in types, form and intensity. Understanding disability will require understanding these differences. According to the World Health Organization "Disability is any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform in a manner or within the range considered normal for a human being".As per the Persons with Disability Act 1995, it has been defined as "a person suffering from not less than forty per cent of any disability as certified by a medical authority" (PWD Act, 1995).

One of the Author identified different types of disabilities like blindness, low vision, cerebral palsy, leprosy cured, hearing impairment, locomotor disability, mental illness and mental retardation as well as multiple disabilities (Baquer, 1994).

Rights of the Person with Disabilities act 2016 has been published in Gazette of India, According to this new act "person with disability" means a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others (RPD Act, 2016).

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) define disability as an umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions (ICF).

The NSSO considered disability as "Any restriction or lack of abilities to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for human being". It excludes illness /injury of recent origin (morbidity) resulting into temporary loss of ability to see, hear, speak or move.

Disability is a "restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being". It describes a functional limitation or activity restriction caused by impairment. Disabilities are descriptions of disturbances in function at the level of the person. Examples of disabilities include difficulty seeing, speaking or hearing; difficulty

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